

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 8748

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MX

SUBJ: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

1. GRATIFIED TO LEARN THAT U.S. AND MEXICAN ADVANCE TEAMS ESTABLISHED GOOD RAPPORT YESTERDAY AND THAT MAGDALENA AND TUBAC SITES HAVE BEEN FOUND MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY.

2. UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT THE MEXICAN PROPOSAL TO HAVE THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT BEGIN AND END AT THE FRONTIER (NOGALES) AND TO INCLUDE A TRIP FROM NOGALES TO MAGDALENA IN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S SPECIAL BUS COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVES BECAUSE THE PROPOSAL WAS CONSIDERED TO BE TIME-CONSUMING, EXPENSIVE AND COMPLICATED THUS FAILING TO MEET PRESIDENT FORD'S WISH TO MAKE THE VISIT A LOW-KEY INFORMAL MEETING BETWEEN FRIENDS. IN VIEW OF IMPORTANCE PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA ATTACHES TO THE TRADITIONAL SYMBOLIC "SHAKE-HANDS" AT THE FRONTIER FOLLOWED BY TRIP IN HIS SPECIAL BUS WHERE PRESIDENT FORD AND HE COULD ESTABLISH NORMAL CONTACT BEFORE EMBARKING ON DISCUSSIONS IN LARGER GROUP AS WELL AS IN INTEREST OF ACHIEVING THE MAXIMUM GOOD WILL FROM THIS INITIAL MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS, HOPE FULL CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S PROPOSALS. IF AN ACCEPTABLE WAS OF ACCOMODATING THEM OR MEETING THEM HALF-WAY (E.G. HOLDING THE ARRIVAL BUT NOT FAREWELL CEREMONY AT NOGALES) CANNOT BE FOUND, PERHAPS IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO USE THE BUS TO CARRY THE PRESIDENTS BETWEEN THE AIRSTRIP OUTSIDE MAGDALENA AND THE CENTER OF TOWN.

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3. REGARDING U.S. PROPOSAL TO HOLD THE FAREWELL CEREMONY IN TUCSON AT DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB, HOPE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE IT AT TUCSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IF DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB WITH ITS VISIBLE HEAVY COMPLEMENT OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT WOULD GIVE TOO MUCH OF A MILITARY FLAVOR TO THE OCCASION FOR PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA. "IMPROMPTU" VISIT TO TUMACACORI MISSION NEAR TUBAC OR SAN XAVIER MISSION OUTSIDE TUCSON, BOTH FOUNDED BY FATHER KINO, WOULD BE NICE TOUCH.

4. MEXICANS UNDOUBTEDLY WILL GIVE PRESIDENT FORD AN ENTHUSIASTIC AND FESTIVE WELCOME. THIS WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO HOLD TO A TIGHT SCHEDULE OR MAINTAIN A RELAXED INFORMAL ATMOSPHERE ON THE MEXICAN SIDE. IT WILL ALSO MAKE IT A STRENUOUS DAY FOR PRESIDENT FORD, ESPECIALLY IF HE PLANS TO START FROM WASHINGTON THAT MORNING. BUT AUGURIES ARE FOR A VERY SUCCESSFUL MEETING AND EMBASSY WILL DO ITS BEST TO MAKE IT SO. JOVA

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